

## BROADCAST 3627

DATE: Feb. 15, 2006

TO: Local Title IV-E eligibility supervisors and workers

FROM: Vickie Johnson-Scott, Director, Division of Family Services

SUBJECT: New Policy for Screening Foster Care Children for Title IV-E Foster Care

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The purpose of this broadcast is to notify Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) of a clarification of Administration for Children and Families (ACF) policy which results in a redefining of Title IV-E foster care policy pertaining to “Aid to Families with Dependent Children AFDC removal home/living with specified relative” requirements. The manual transmittal is attached on page two of this broadcast.

Under current policy, to be Title IV-E eligible the child must have lived with a specified relative during the eligibility month. If the child is not living with a specified relative during the eligibility month but has lived with a specified relative within six months of the eligibility month, the AFDC specified relative requirement is met. The specified relative is defined as the parent or other relative who is within the fifth degree of the relationship. That specified relative’s home is considered the removal home and the child has to meet AFDC relatedness in that home during the eligibility month to be Title IV-E eligible. Currently, there is no requirement in Virginia to evaluate “legal custody “of the child.

ACF policy defines specified relative as the person(s) who has legal custody of the child in which custody is being taken from through a court ordered removal or Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA). Specifically, in order to qualify for Title IV-E foster care, a child must meet AFDC relatedness in the home of the specified relative (relative who is within the fifth degree of relationship) who has legal custody of the child and the child must have lived with that specified relative during the eligibility month or within six months of the eligibility month.

To ensure compliance with ACF policy, LDSS must immediately apply the ACF policy interpretation when making Title IV-E eligibility determinations on applications. Additionally, any currently active Title IV-E cases in which the child was not living with the specified relative who had legal custody when the removal occurred must be re-screened applying this policy. If the re-screening results in ineligibility, the case must be closed and switched to Comprehensive Service Act (CSA) in eligibility Virginia Client Information System (VACIS) as well as services Online Automated Services Information System (OASIS).

This policy change is effective upon receipt of this broadcast. Statewide training to address policy changes due to this announcement and other policy enhancements will begin on Feb. 24. A broadcast announcing the training sites and times will be posted by Feb. 16. The transmittal specifying the policy changes is attached to this broadcast and is posted at:

<http://localagency.dss.virginia.gov/divisions/dfs/permanency/eligibility/manual.cgi>.

February XX, 2006

Transmittal #202

**FOR: TITLE IV-E ELIGIBILITY PROGRAM MANUAL**

This transmittal contains changes and clarifications to the [Title IV-E Eligibility Manual](#). The transmittal is effective upon posting.

The includes updates from federal law and regulation and input from the regional Title IV-E Eligibility Specialists, the Foster and Adoption Specialists, and the Title IV-E Eligibility Advisory Committee, comprised of local department of social services eligibility and service workers, directors, court improvement staff, state and regional Title IV-E Specialists and Division of Finance staff, and private providers. The changes to this manual are a result of Virginia's continued efforts to improve Title IV-E Eligibility policy guidance and increase compliance with federal requirements in preparation for the Title IV-E Eligibility Review.

Significant changes involve primarily the clarification of who is identified as the specified relative when making AFDC relatedness determinations. The following is a list of sections in the manual where changes were made:

Issue	Section	Significant Change
<u>Specified Relative</u>	202.1	Revision: Clarifies the definition of the removal home and specified relative
<u>Specified Relative</u>	202.3.A	Revision: Clarifies that the court ordered removal must be from the person who has legal custody of the child
<u>Child in Runaway Status</u>	202.2.B.6	Addition: "The child is on runaway or absent without leave (AWOL) status for more than six consecutive months."
<u>Specified Relative</u>	202.4.C	Revision: Clarifies the removal home and types of removals
<u>AFDC Assistance Unit</u>	202.4.G	Revision: Clarifies who is to be included in the AFDC assistance unit
<u>Specified Relative</u>	202 Appendix 2	Revision: Clarifies who is to be considered the specified relative
<u>Specified Relative</u>	301.5.A	Revision: Clarifies who is to be considered the specified relative
<u>Specified Relative</u>	301.5.C	Revision: Clarifies who is to be considered the specified relative

Due to the availability of the revised manual via the intranet, paper copies will not be sent to local agencies. If you have any questions about these changes, please contact your Title IV-E Eligibility Program Specialist.



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